

OAKLEY COUNTRY CLUB



1898-1973

just a surgen

NOTES ON SEVENTY-FIVE HAPPY YEARS
AT THE
OAKLEY COUNTRY
CLUB

ORIGINALLY CHARTERED AS THE
CAMBRIDGE GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB


FEBRUARY 16, 1898

AND NAMED THE
OAKLEY COUNTRY CLUB

NOVEMBER 15, 1898

1973

WATERTOWN
MASSACHUSETTS



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FOREWORD

Because the following pages intentionally are factual in content, and without attempt at interpretation, it seems fitting here to consider the underlying reasons for Oakley's long and successful history.

A country club has two principal purposes—to provide an opportunity for outdoor sports and to establish a congenial meeting place for friends. If such a club fails in either purpose, it must fail completely or undergo radical change. That Oakley has continued without interruption for three quarters of a century means that it has succeeded in these two objectives. That several thousand members have belonged to and supported Oakley during these seventy-five years of continuous activity gives ample evidence the Club has fulfilled its purpose well.

Through radical changes in customs and en-

FOREWORD

vironment each group of Oakley members has passed along to succeeding groups a deep affection for the Club and a spirit of democratic, neighborly fellowship. This is a heritage which we current Oakley members must hand on undiminished.

The preceding words were those which constituted the Foreword in the account of Oakley's first fifty years, published in 1948. They needed only the substitution of seventy-five for fifty to serve equally well for this recital.

M.O.

ORIGIN AND CHANGES

The origin of the Oakley Country Club found its inspiration in a surge of new interest in outdoor sports which appeared in the United States early in the eighteen-nineties. Golf was first played in America about 1885, and George Wright—a Bostonian—is credited with importing the first clubs and balls.

St. Andrews course at Yonkers, New York, playing on only six holes, was the first in America. By 1893 eighteen-hole courses started to appear, and by 1894, the first national championship was held at Newport, Rhode Island. It was at medal play, and the winning score was 188 for thirty-six holes. By that time interest really took hold, and in 1895 the number of listed courses more than doubled—reaching one hundred by the end of the year.

Golfers of the last century did not expect a great deal either in their courses or in their

ORIGIN AND CHANGES

equipment. The game's greatest event, the Scotch open, was played on a nine-hole course at Musselburgh every third year (until late in the 1890's). It was natural, therefore, that the new enthusiasts in the United States should make their start with nine- and even six-hole layouts and very modest attempts at course architecture. It took only a few congenial souls, ten acres of open land, and a few dollars to get started.

These conditions resulted in the birth of numerous courses, many of them short-lived, and the greater number so situated that the pressure of city expansion soon overwhelmed them. The Allston course, including the subsequent Braves Field site, was one of these.

In Watertown, by 1896, there were three courses in play. Directly south of Oakley, in the area surrounding the Hosmer and East Junior High Schools and bounded by Mt. Auburn, School and Boylston streets, a group—largely from Cambridge—played golf on nine holes, had a small shed for equipment, commuted by the trolley or by their own carriages, and developed a love for golf which determined the

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founding of Oakley. Sheep cropped the greens of that early course and, on one occasion at least, strayed and were impounded.

The Pratt estate, which included most of Oakley's present holdings, was on the market. The Stearns estate to the south was available for rental, there were enough interested friends to make a club possible, and a start was made.

Title to the Pratt estate was taken by a small group who made the purchase by use of their own funds. A lease to this same group was arranged from the Stearns estate. This group leased these holdings to the Cambridge Golf and Country Club, which was chartered in February, 1898, and had a membership for that year of two hundred and two. Golf was played on a course laid out by the joint efforts of the members, chief of whom were R. H. Dana and Willie Campbell, who had been runner-up in the first U. S. open held at St. Andrews in 1894.

In November, 1898, the Cambridge Golf and Country Club—which in its first and only year-book had designated its address as Oakleigh, Watertown—changed its name to the Oakley Country Club. The old was already giving way

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to the new in spelling and in appearance for early newspaper accounts recite that many a stately oak tree was sacrificed to golf's demand for open spaces.

One of the moving spirits of the organization, Professor Robert W. Wilson of Harvard's astronomy department, met Donald Ross in Dornoch, Scotland, and engaged him as Oakley's professional. Ross took over in April, 1899, at which time the course was by no means completed. In fact he subsequently wrote that there had been no "intention to stay on the nine hole course in the lowlands." It was Ross who eventually gave Oakley's course substantially its present layout although it was not too long before the lure of Pinehurst and the practice of golf architecture took him away from residence.

The Club almost certainly had two main functions at the outset. The golf course, the single tennis court, attracted probably a minority. The club house, with the stables and grooms, made Oakley a pleasant goal for a drive, and an attractive spot for tea, for dining, and for general social pleasure. The matter of horses and carriages occupies much space in

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the Club rules. Until 1917 the Club was prepared to bait or to clean horses at a fee of fifty cents; even in 1910 automobiles might not use the regular driveway; and not until the passage of six years more was it permissible to park in front of the club house.

The 1898 record shows well over half of Oakley's members as Bostonians. Indeed the first roster was replete with names familiar when Massachusetts was still the Bay Colony. In 1901, out of three hundred members Boston still furnished nearly one half, and not until 1905 did Cambridge members become a majority. Today's membership appropriately constitutes a broad cross-section of the suburbanites of the 1970's but the easy accessibility of Oakley is still one of its great attractions and probably the majority of its members live in Belmont and Watertown.

Memories of 1904 and later have been recorded. At that time very little weekday golf was played. Twosomes were the rule and matches arranged for in advance.

The tennis activities were very important. The single court, on the site of the later dorm-

ORIGIN AND CHANGES

itory, was supplemented by two more located in what is now rough directly west of the present thirteenth tee. Then more courts were built near the twelfth tee, and at one time eight courts were in active use. Tennis interest began to decline in the 1930's and only the two courts at the twelfth tee have survived but presently that interest is being revived.

Curling was attempted, first in a flat spot east of the dormitory, and later on flooded tennis courts. But Oakley was never successful in maintaining a surface for enough days to make the sport popular.

In 1906 the dormitory, or bungalow, was built, at first two stories high and providing eighteen rooms. In 1911 a third story was added. It stood just beyond the present utility building, between the first and fourth fairways. During those years when in summer families frequently migrated to the mountains or the sea while male adults continued at work, the dormitory was extremely popular and rooms had to be reserved well in advance. But eventually vacation habits changed and in 1960 the structure was demolished.

ORIGIN AND CHANGES

In 1912 a serious fire damaged much of the second floor of the club house, and in the course of rebuilding a third story was added. The first notice of extra rooms available appears in the 1913 club book. In the years just prior to this expansion there had been under consideration a proposal for utilizing the Payson mansion, which Oakley then controlled, as a club house. But the cost of such a move and the charm of the house they already occupied caused the idea to be discarded.

Squash has been played at Oakley in a brick building north of the practice green. The sport was never generally popular, but during the years of great tennis activity a small group tested the capacity of the two courts available. This building, originally the laundry, was later used to house grounds equipment and finally had to give way to the construction of our present parking lot. Even then it made one last contribution to Oakley's welfare; its ancient bricks were tenderly removed and sold for some \$3000.

SITE

Oakley Hill, called Strawberry Hill on the very earliest maps of Watertown, and for nearly two centuries thereafter, has always had its part in Watertown tradition. One of the early meetinghouses in town was built on Common Street, near our sixth green. Whether the location was at the center of population, or at the best point for observing the approach of unfriendly Indians, is a matter beyond this history. In any event Oakley's commanding situation recommended it to the military during World War I as an appropriate site for anti-aircraft guns designed to protect the Watertown arsenal.

Springs, wells, and brooks originating on Oakley's sixth and third fairways supplied water for early settlers on the southern slopes. Two small concrete caps near the third tee cover wells, from which water was piped as recently as 1890.

SITE

The hill is usually considered to be a glacial drumlin, made up of boulders, clay, and gravel, unlike the ledges of Belmont Hill. Three parallel gashes cut by glaciation appear, one at the right of the seventeenth green, the others on the second and the sixth. Underneath the hill are waterbearing strata carrying water from some far-off higher areas. The water level in our well at the old pump house was far above the level of Belmont Street, and the volume was greater than that which could be supplied by the rainfall on Oakley alone.

Perhaps a spring flowing from the bank at the first tee inspired the original builder to sink a well and construct the first dwelling on the hill, directly on the site of our present club house, probably in 1685. At any rate, dwellings were mentioned in a deed of 1715.

In earliest recorded transfers appear the names of Daniel Maccon, Ebenezer Hastings, and J. B. Stratton. In 1737 the property, then including about ten acres, passed to John Vila, whose descendants held title until 1808, when Harrison Gray Otis took title to dwelling, barn, and ten acres.

SITE

In 1825 Otis sold to William Pratt, and by that time the area had become forty-five acres, and stables and other buildings are mentioned. The dwelling is now described as the "mansion house."

The Pratt family apparently lived on Oakley for many years and were responsible for the greenhouses and many other structures, gardeners' cottages and the like, all of which have now disappeared; those that survived the construction of the golf course having gradually given way to the expansion of the pro-shop, utility building and the parking lot.

Three large estates were built adjoining Oakley. To the west were the Paysons, whose mansion has become the center of Mt. Trinity Academy. To the east, between the eleventh fairway and School Street, stood a large yellow frame house—quite as large as the Harrison Gray Otis house—which for a time was in the hands of an Adams family, and for some time after Oakley's founding was the Cambridge Riding and Driving Club. Noise from the stables and poultry sheds often disturbed intent putters on the eleventh green.

SITE

To the south was the Stearns estate, which in 1898 extended up the hill to the sixteenth green and the wall bordering the third fairway. The old Stearns house stood on Stearns Road.

Apparently, by 1897, large mansions in Watertown had ceased to be attractive. Trolleys were about to run both to Waverley and to Watertown. Seclusion was less than complete. Pratt was willing to sell all forty-five acres. Stearns sold some and leased more. Payson sold the fifth fairway and moved the stucco barn nearer his house, where it still stands. Oakley's founders had a fair fraction of old Strawberry Hill for their new project.

Probably the Payson land, which included two greens, our present fifth and ninth, was developed a little later than other areas. At one time the present fourth and thirteenth were split into two holes each. The old tees are still visible. There is also the story that at one time the sight of golfers, who then wore bright jackets and blazers, offended churchgoers and that Sunday morning golf was confined to areas little visible from the street. At such times these extra holes became useful. Besides the prejudice not-

SITE

ed above, the original lease from Stearns specifically prohibited Sunday golf on any land leased from him.

Early golfers in Massachusetts had a lot of trouble with their Sunday activities. The "blue laws" frowned on games on the Sabbath, and a week-end golfer always had to consider the possibility of arrest and court action. This situation was relieved, to a major extent, by the action of an Oakley member, Mott Hallowell.

As attorney for the city of Medford, he was called into a "blue law" case and gave his legal opinion that golf was not properly defined as a "game" or a "sport," but rather as an ambulatory exercise or promenade, to which certain other activities might attach, but were not essential. This opinion apparently met popular approval and has never been questioned in court.

CLUB HOUSE

the gardens of Charleston, which were even then world famous. It seems likely that our copper beech, on the sixteenth, may have come from that source. It is a European tree and was not widely known in the United States at that time.

We can imagine parties arriving by coach from Boston, dining, dancing, and returning to the Boston mansion by moonlight. Oakley did not have many bedrooms, probably only the most distinguished visitors stayed there. When we remember that, as one of Boston's first citizens, Otis had the privilege of entertaining many of the prominent visitors to Boston, it is easy to believe that Oakley was not the least pleasant memory of America for many a distinguished foreign visitor who enjoyed the lawns, trees, drives, oval room, and above all the view over Boston, then untarnished by industrial smoke.

Frank Whitcher, who loved and was loved of Oakley, became much interested in the Otis story and, after study of the records, presented the Club with the bronze tablet which was set into the front wall of the old club house and

CLUB HOUSE

dedicated with ceremony in 1933 and which now appears at the right of the entrance to our present club house.

The story so impressed Mr. Whitcher with the character of Otis that he wrote the following notes which, in his own handwriting, are treasured in Oakley's files:

"As Harrison Gray Otis owned Oakley from 1808 to 1825, it is my understanding that while he had the original house remodeled into a beautiful country home, he also gave much attention to the development of the grounds. The trees, shrubbery, and planting which line the driveway indicate that they must have been set out as long ago as when he occupied the place.

"The general landscape of the grounds shows the result of thoughtful planning and the work of one who knew how to beautify an estate to please the eye of the public. The general layout of the lawn, grape hothouse, and servants quarters, placing them where they would be partially hidden by the trees and would not obstruct the view, show that it was done by a person of fine taste and who well understood the work of

CLUB HOUSE

a landscape architect. The winding driveway lined with trees and so planned that it can be seen its entire length from entrance to the house is typical of the fine old English estates with which Otis must have been familiar. As he was a great entertainer, one can well imagine the house parties he gave and the life and beauty of the coaches with their four horses and a bugler making the welkin ring as a gay party approached the house."

OFFICERS

That Oakley is celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary is due, in very great measure, to the wisdom and industry of the many officers and committee members who have served the Club with unflagging loyalty and affection throughout the three quarters of a century.

Written into the records of the directors are numerous expressions of gratitude and appreciation for these services. In many cases the language of these expressions is so eloquent and the recital of the accomplishments so impressive, that it becomes plain that the members in those years thoroughly realized how much the Club owed to the individuals to whom the memorials were addressed.

A complete list of all who have served well and honorably would hold several hundred names. Only the names of the principal officers are included in the following lists:

OFFICERS

PRESIDENTS

Charles Eustis Hubbard	1898–1903
Richard H. Dana	1904–1906; also 1911
Joseph B. Russell	1907–1910
John H. Storer	1912
William V. Kellen	1913
Warren M. Whiting	1914–1916
Philip Cabot	1917–1918
Arthur H. Brooks	1919–1922
Frank D. Fairbanks	1923–1925
Philip G. Carleton	1926–1927; also 1932
Willard B. Luther	1928
Charles Stetson	1929–1931
Walter F. Earle	1933
Francis R. Boyd	1934–1935
Arthur F. Bickford	1936–1937
Charles W. Chamberlain	1938–1939
Francis H. Kendall	1940–1942
Robert B. Kayser	1943–1945
C. Lawrence Muench	1946
Frederick L. Reynolds	1947–1948
Harry J. Landen	1949
Frank Butterworth	1950–1953
Rupert L. Mapplebeck	1954
James Thomson, Jr.	1955–1959
William A. Schan	1960–1962
Frank H. McGowan	1963–1964
William F. Haley	1965–1966
Michael Ohanian	1967–1968

OFFICERS

Thomas G. Menton	1969-1970
Daniel K. Dorian	1971-1972
Michael Ohanian	1973-

TREASURERS

William M. Richardson	1898-1919
Robert W. Knowles	1920
C. Oliver Wellington	1921-1927
Arthur L. Risley	1928-1933
William B. Durant	1934-1954
Carroll M. Cain	1955-1960
Douglas C. Thomson	1961-1962
James Thomson, Jr.	1963-1972
William F. Haley	1973-

SECRETARIES

Philip Dexter	1898
Arthur H. Brooks	1899-1904
Thomas B. Gannett, Jr.	1905
George W. Cram	1906-1933
Robert M. Darling	1934
Louis M. Hannum	1935-1952
William Halnan	1953
Edward J. Flynn	1954-1965
Frederick G. Hathaway	1966-1969
Henry W. Ekstrom	1970
David L. Mitchell	1971-

GOLF COURSE

Any golf course begun in 1897 had to be designed on the theory that much of the play would use the gutty ball. This ball could not be driven far, nor was it possible to apply back-spin. Greens were usually built so that the ball could roll up to the putting surface, and greens were generally flat, or followed the natural contour of the ground, rather than banked up. Our second, sixth, eleventh, and thirteenth are of this type, and unchanged since first built.

From 1898 through 1906 Oakley had three holes on land not now occupied by the Club. These were all to the south of the present seventeenth, and play went nearly down to Mt. Auburn Street. The first hole played approximately as at present, but there was a deep, shrub-filled pit directly in front of the tee. A topped drive might easily mean double figures on the hole.

The second hole played from the present





PLAN OF GOLF LINKS
 OF THE
OAKLEY COUNTRY CLUB

WATERTOWN

New Course
 to be ready
 about
 Oct 14 1900

Walter C. Stevens,
 Civil Engineer & Surveyor
 100 E. 1st St. Dec 1899

GOLF COURSE

practice tee, due south to a green well to the right of the present seventeenth and at the bottom of the hill, about the junction of Stoneleigh and Arden roads. Players then walked through a grove of nut trees, many of which still stand on the house lots of Arden Road, and arrived at the present second tee.

The sixth was a complete punch bowl, played from our present fifth tee, and the green was in the hollow directly in front of our present sixth tee. The level of the green was even lower than the present saucer and the approach was absolutely blind. Behind the green, set into the stone wall, was a direction flag mounted on a pole at least thirty feet high, and at the next tee was a semaphore, which players set to warning, before going down into the abyss. Of course it had to be set to clear, before the next match could approach with safety, and on the rare occasions when this formality was omitted, hard feelings might arise.

The next green was our present ninth. There were, therefore, two fairways in the space of our present fifth.

The hole following the present fourteenth

GOLF COURSE

was famous. From a tee in the rough on the edge of the tenth fairway, about halfway between the then exit driveway (now buried under the parking lot or appearing as simply a grassed-over ridge) and the site of the old barn, play went directly up the hill to the present practice green. A hooked drive would reach the driveway, where the ball might roll back endlessly, or be found at rest near an excited horse tied up in the driveway. A slice would come to rest behind the squash courts. Only a long hitter would attempt to drive directly over the squash court to the green, and there was a large tree which made that shot still more hazardous. This hole was abandoned when the present seventh was built about 1915.

The sixteenth was then Oakley's fourth longest hole. Starting at the present seventeenth tee, play went south, down through the valley to the right of the present seventeenth to a flat green, well beyond the present Stoneleigh Road and near Stearns Road. After a short hole played due east, play went to the present eighteenth green after a terrifying drive up a steep hill over the wall behind the present

GOLF COURSE

eighteenth tee. It took a good shot to carry that wall, and any error could cost multiple strokes.

About 1907 the three holes to the south were abandoned. The present sixth, eighth, and seventeenth greens were built. As the punch bowl, then the fifth, was still in play, the sixth tee was to the right of the hollow and had a stone wall foundation.

After the sixth, players moved to a tee next to Common Street at the left of the Club property and played to the present eighth green, play going directly over the sixth green, where the following match had to stand aside. That was a hard pitch shot. The green was slightly banked, but not heavily so, and only a high pitch had any chance of arriving and sticking.

The next move was the building of the present seventh, abandoning play to the practice green and moving the fifth out of the hollow to its present location. By 1915 the course played as at present.

The original greens of the first, fifth, tenth, fifteenth, and seventeenth have all been completely regraded and contoured, the last job being on the first green about 1930, when the

GOLF COURSE

steam shovel moved over fifteen hundred yards of earth to bring the green up to grade.

The eighth green was partially rebuilt about 1921 to accommodate play coming from the present tee, rather than the pitch shot from the south for which it was originally designed. The raised banks at the back of the fourth and ninth greens are the product of recent years, that at the ninth having been built only in 1972.

GOLFERS

Oakley fairways have seen much fine golf and many notable golfers. Beginning with Harry Vardon, who played here in 1901, a succession of famous visiting players have given exhibitions or enjoyed friendly matches. Bobby Jones was here occasionally when attending Harvard. Ray and Duncan played an exhibition match in the nineteen-twenties.

Probably thirty-five years were required to set the all-time, all-player ringer score of 34—seventeen eagles and one double eagle—a deuce on the thirteenth. Over forty years passed before Jug McSpaden set the course record of 63, which subsequently was tied by Clayton Clancy Jr. and then was surpassed by Paul Donahue who in 1964 carded a fantastic 62—10 birdies, 7 pars and 1 bogey, the last on the seventh hole.

From the beginning women were a notable part of Oakley. The first by-laws provided for

GOLFERS

membership in their own right by widows and unmarried women and there was a woman on the first house committee.

The course record for women was set by Constance Richard in 1967—with a 74. Then in 1972 this score was matched by Noreen Friel, a guest, when playing in an annual tournament of Women Golf Champions.

If all the trophies won by Oakley players in major tournaments came to the club we would have a storage problem.

In the early 1900's the women golfers, all of whose names were on the Ladies Cup, held the amazing total of seven National Championships and thirteen Massachusetts State Championships.

However, only two of these won National Championships while playing from Oakley—Pauline MacKay in 1905 and Mrs. H. Arnold Jackson in 1914. Oakley winners of Massachusetts State Championships were:

1901	Pauline MacKay
1904	Pauline MacKay
1906	Pauline MacKay
1909	Mary B. Adams

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1916	S. Ramsey
1917	Mrs. H. Arnold Jackson
1919	Mrs. Edwin W. Daley
1924	Miss Stone
1925	Mrs. Edward H. Baker ✓
1927	Mrs. Edward H. Baker ✓
1928	Mrs. Edward H. Baker ✓
1929	Mrs. Edward H. Baker ✓
1931	Rosamund Vahey
1932	Mrs. Edward H. Baker ✓
1934	Rosamund Vahey
1935	Rosamund Vahey

Edith Baker (Mrs. Edward H. Baker) who is now an Honorary Member of Oakley, was twice on the winning pair of the Massachusetts Mixed Foursome Championship. She also won the Endicott Cup in the Tri-State matches.

Rosamund Vahey with Clayton Clancy Jr. and Josephine Halnan with Ed Peterson were winning pairs in Massachusetts Mixed Foursomes.

This is too much of a record for the men to match; but our Oakley Champions, whose list appears later, never won that title easily, nor could they be regarded lightly in any tournament in which they took part.

GOLFERS

✓ J. G. Thorp, six times Oakley Champion between 1902 and 1915, was finalist in the National in 1896, playing at Shinnercock Hills; and in 1909, when the Massachusetts Amateur was played at Oakley, he was runner-up to Percival Gilbert. ✓

F. C. Davidson, won the Collegiate title for Harvard in 1912, as James F. Curtis, an original Oakley golfer, had done in 1898.

More recently Ed Peterson, a seven-time Oakley champion, won the New England Intercollegiate when it was first played.

But perhaps Oakley's most unique distinction came many years later when in 1968 Michael Ohanian was at one and the same time President of the Club, Club Champion and Massachusetts Amateur Champion. He has already matched Peterson's record.

Many Oakley caddies have gone on to play very fine golf.

Fred Wright, Jr., who started here, after winning several junior titles was seven times Massachusetts Champion besides playing extraordinary competitive golf on both sides of the Atlantic.

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The Martins, Leo and Edward, were for ten years often medalists and always well up at the top in Massachusetts tournaments. Leo won the State championship in 1941, and Edward in 1948 and again in 1951.

Jack Flynn also carried on the tradition of Grade-A golf learned on Oakley fairways.

The list of honored names is too long for this sketch. The omissions are probably as worthy as the inclusions.

At the present time Oakley's main events are the New England Intercollegiate and the Cowan Memorial, when New England's finest golfers meet on Oakley's fairways. These events are described under "Trophies."

OAKLEY CHAMPIONS

1901	A. L. Ripley	1909	W. C. Chick
1902	J. G. Thorp	1910	F. C. Davidson
1903	W. C. Chick	1911	F. C. Davidson
1904	W. C. Chick	1912	J. G. Thorp
1905	J. G. Thorp	1913	N. W. Dean
1906	J. G. Thorp	1914	R. C. Cushman, Jr.
1907	W. C. Chick	1915	J. G. Thorp
1908	J. G. Thorp	1916	E. W. Daley

GOLFERS

OAKLEY CHAMPIONS (*Continued*)

1917	E. W. Daley	1946	C. M. Cain
1918-19	Not played	1947	Clayton Clancy, Jr.
1920	W. G. Ball	1948	F. J. Wright, Jr.
1921	C. T. Skehens	1949	F. J. Wright, Jr.
1922	C. T. Skehens	1950	L. R. Sullivan, Jr.
1923	C. T. Skehens	1951	L. R. Sullivan, Jr.
1924	J. M. Richards	1952	P. F. Donahue
1925	W. W. Munsell	1953	P. F. Donahue
1926	R. G. Carpenter	1954	J. F. Mahoney
1927	W. W. Munsell	1955	P. F. Donahue
1928	R. G. Carpenter	1956	J. F. Mahoney
1929	W. W. Munsell	1957	J. F. Mahoney
1930	E. H. Peterson	1958	R. P. Neff
1931	W. W. Munsell	1959	J. Wolf
1932	E. H. Peterson	1960	M. Ohanian
1933	R. G. Carpenter	1961	D. Keefe
1934	E. H. Peterson	1962	F. Sperlinga
1935	E. H. Peterson	1963	S. Bettencourt
1936	E. H. Peterson	1964	J. Wolf
1937	E. H. Peterson	1965	M. Ohanian
1938	E. H. Peterson	1966	M. Ohanian
1939	C. M. Cain	1967	M. Ohanian
1940	C. M. Cain	1968	M. Ohanian
1941	C. M. Cain	1969	S. Bettencourt
1942	J. D. Woodfin, Jr.	1970	M. Ohanian
1943	J. J. Grinold	1971	M. Ohanian
1944	J. D. Woodfin, Jr.	1972	J. Wolf
1945	J. D. Woodfin, Jr.		

GOLFERS

OAKLEY WOMEN CHAMPIONS

(so far as records are discoverable)

1904	Margaret Curtis
1905	Pauline MacKay
1906	Pauline MacKay
1907	Mary B. Adams
1908	Fanny C. Osgood
1909	Mrs. E. W. Batchelder
1910	Mrs. E. C. Wheeler, Jr.
1911	Fanny C. Osgood
1912	Mrs. E. C. Wheeler, Jr.
1913	Mrs. E. C. Wheeler, Jr.
1914	Mrs. H. Arnold Jackson
1915	Mrs. Edwin W. Daley
1916	Mrs. Edwin W. Daley
1917-1941	<u>records missing</u>
1942	Mrs. George F. Boltz ✓
1945	Mrs. George F. Boltz ✓
1946	Mrs. John P. Heanue
1947	Mrs. John D. Woodfin
1948	Mrs. George F. Boltz ✓
1949	Mrs. George F. Boltz ✓
1950	Mrs. George F. Boltz ✓
1951	Helen White
1952	Mrs. Edward H. Baker
1953	Mrs. Edward H. Baker
1954	Ruth Sampson
1955	Mrs. George F. Boltz ✓
1956	Mrs. George F. Boltz ✓

GOLFERS

1957	Mrs. George F. Boltz	18
1958	Helen Lang	
1959	Norma Rodsater	
1960	Norma Rodsater	2
1961	Ruth Sampson	
1962	June Dion	
1963	Norma Rodsater	
1964	Mrs. Donald Sweeney	
1965	Constance Richard	
1966	Mrs. C. Francis Donovan	
1967	Constance Richard	
1968	Constance Richard	
1969	Constance Richard	
1970	Norma Rodsater	4
1971	Mrs. Lynn Olmsted	
1972	Mrs. Lynn Olmsted	

An account of Oakley golf would be incomplete without mention of the highly popular mixed events, designed to bring out those golfers, both men and women, who might otherwise be reluctant to enter into competition against the field.

In the 1940's and 50's they were the Forced Mixems. In the 1960's and 70's they were the Friday Night Scotchies.

In the Forced Mixems, a blind draw from a list of men and another of women set up the

GOLFERS

partnerships; in the Friday Night Scotches, the partnerships are usually voluntary; but in both cases, selected drives, alternate shots, and current handicaps have provided every player with a chance—and with someone to share either the brilliance or the blame.

Play has been followed by excellent buffets, conversational replays and the awarding of prizes. Of course, only because someone has been willing to devote unflagging attention to the multitude of details and the mass of arithmetic, could the events have been so successful; and Oakley has been fortunate indeed in the couples who have, successively over the years, provided that supervision—and, incidentally, have made their operation self-supporting.

PROFESSIONALS

It is not generally realized that, in the early days of golf and to some extent until the advent of steel shafts, a golf professional was a craftsman in club-making. Only through a long apprenticeship could the art be mastered—and there were not many teachers. This situation explains why practically all professionals came from the United Kingdom until about 1920. Tailor-made clubs, to fit the physique and style of a player, were sources of pride to the owner and profit to the maker. Oakley's shop was always famous for the craftsmanship of its club-makers, and many distinguished professionals used to visit to discuss their art.

For over half a century all of Oakley's professionals, excepting Mike Brady, were Scotsmen.

After Willie Campbell helped in building the course, there was a short time when W. T. Andersen, of whom there are only scant mem-

PROFESSIONALS

ories, acted as professional until Donald Ross came and, from 1899 until 1910, made himself a part of Oakley. In his shop worked several assistants who became well known. Herbert Lagerblade, Skip Wogan, and our own Fred Low worked with Donald. His brother Alex spent a year or so at Oakley, helping when business was especially brisk. Donald Ross was Massachusetts Open Champion in 1905 and 1911.

Tom Hucknall served in 1911 and 1912 and was followed by Chris Callaway from 1913 through 1916.

Mike Brady was Oakley's professional from 1916 to 1920 and was probably the most famous competitive golfer who ever held the post. Brady's reputation was such that the Encyclopaedia Britannica chose him for some of the pictures illustrating the article on golf. He tied twice for U. S. Open Championship and lost the play-off both times. He was three times Massachusetts Open Champion.

John Cowan came in 1921 and stayed till his death, which came suddenly while giving an indoor lesson in 1936. He won the New England

PROFESSIONALS

P.G.A. in 1923 and was runner-up in 1922. John was at Oakley longer than any professional before him and in his fifteen years earned a permanent place in the affection of the membership.

Fred Low, who came with us in 1937, learned club-making from Simpson in Carnoustie, Scotland. He came to America in 1903 and served with Donald Ross in 1908. He held the post of professional at Brae Burn from 1925 till 1936 and then at Oakley till 1955.

In 1956 Paul Donahue, for many years a member and three times Club Champion, succeeded Low as our professional. Eight years later he gave Oakley additional reason to be proud of him by setting—as previously recounted—a new course record of 62.



EARLY OAKLEY TROPHIES

TROPHIES

Trophies, like members, come and go; some by permanent retention by winners, some by disaster such as fire, some by mysterious disappearance. The following no longer adorn our club house:

THE OAKLEY CUP — presented in 1901 by J. G. Thorp and designed to record the names of Oakley's Champions.

THE LADIES CUP — presented in 1904 by Alfred L. Ripley and inscribed with the names of Oakley Women Champions through 1916.

THE EARLE SHIELD — presented in 1923 by Walter F. Earle and Charles B. Earle, to record winners of the Seniors (over fifty).

THE BOYS' CUP — presented in 1932 by Charles E. Bacon, to record winners among competitors over seventy years of age.

THE WHITCHER TROPHY — presented in 1934 by Frank W. Whitcher. Although the cup is gone, the tournament is still played.

TROPHIES

THE SANDS TROPHY — presented in 1937 by John Alles in memory of Donald Phipps Sands. Here again, even though the cup has departed, the tournament remains.

THE JOHN COWAN MEMORIAL SHIELD — presented in 1936 by a group of his friends, to record the winners in a pro-member tournament which continues to be held, but minus the shield.

THE INTERCOLLEGIATE OAKLEY CLUB TROPHY falls into another category. It was presented in 1933 by Frank W. Whitcher for the Championship in competition regulated by the New England Intercollegiate Golf Association. Hence it is a roving trophy to be found now in one college and now in another. Highly prized, its space for inscriptions is now approaching exhaustion.

However, there are still trophies on display, even though presently popular tournaments look to rewards more tangibly satisfying than trophies:

THE OAKLEY BOWL — inspired by Horace Stevens and first used in 1936 — was intended to serve in dispensing hospitality, and to record the names of members whom the Club wished particularly to honor, as well as the winners of an annual tournament. That tournament was an all-inclusive, two team affair, the Oaks and the Acorns, and the losing team was expected to

THE THIRD QUARTER-CENTURY

To New Englanders the activities and artifacts of their predecessors seem always to have a nostalgic appeal. And on that score, it has appeared appropriate to the compilers of the present recital to preserve in substantially its original form the fascinating account of Oakley's first fifty years published in 1948. Except, therefore, for occasional insertions or deletions, designed to enhance the understanding and entertainment of the current reader or to bring the record up to date, the work of the 1948 historians has been left largely intact.

The earlier account, however, does not record the fact that the Fiftieth Anniversary was celebrated with week-long festivities, culminating in a grand banquet at which an impressive list of notables, including the then governor of Massachusetts, Robert F. Bradford, were honored guests.

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Perhaps only against that description of Oakley as it used to be, is it possible to appreciate how greatly the physical aspects of the club have changed in the last twenty-five years.

But the first major event was not physical; it was financial. There is scarcely a hint in the summary of the earlier years of Oakley's operational problems. As with other country clubs, then and now, problems had existed, however; and in 1920 a bold attempt had been made to surmount them by means of a bond issue in the amount of \$140,000, at 6%, maturing in 1940. Then came the great depression of the 1930's, followed by World War II in the 1940's. At the maturity of these bonds the Club had no funds with which to pay any appreciable part of the principal or, indeed, the interest.

And so the matter rested until the late 1950's when for the most part the holders of the bonds and the then active members were no longer one and the same. Finally a co-operative approach by both groups achieved a settlement. The bond-holders relinquished their claim for interest; the active members raised funds to liquidate the principal. It was roughly an equal

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contribution on both sides, and Oakley could once more look to improvement of its club house and golf course.

In 1960 the old dormitory, no longer in demand, was removed; and the swimming pool was added. In 1961 a new pro-shop was built.

As early as 1959 renovation of the club house had been under study, and several architectural proposals had been successively drafted and discussed, but before a definitive selection had been made, disaster struck in the form of fire. Over the years Oakley had had fires before; but that in May 1962 was terminal. Fortunately no lives were lost but the lovely onetime mansion of Harrison Gray Otis was damaged beyond restoration.

During these same years suggestions had also been advanced for disposing of what had become an unexpandable golf course in an urban community and replacing it with new and more spacious facilities in a still country area. Following the fire the hard decision had to be made; and it was made at a special membership meeting in September 1962 held on the strangely still standing and dearly beloved great porch

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of the old club house facing the sixteenth fairway. That decision was overwhelmingly to build a new—our present—club house on the site of the old one.

Play on the golf course had never ceased but now social facilities were to be restored. Plans were drawn, financing arranged, contracts let, an accounting office set up in Waverley Square, and in January 1963 Oakley had at least limited club house facilities available in the structure which now serves to shelter our grounds equipment. By late July of that same year the new club house was ready for occupancy.

Then Oakley members turned their attention to the golf course. The possibility of an automatic watering system had been under wishful study for years. As early as 1958 an excellent written report had been made and now, with the new club house in operation and with finances under control, action followed; so that by late 1965 Oakley's fairways ceased to be dependent on New England's unevenly spaced rainfall. The dramatically improved condition of the course induced in turn the enlargement of tees, and the strategic insertion of new traps.

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Some of the latter, incidentally, closed off what remained of the great circular driveway of former days. At that time, too, the last of our old buildings, the wooden half-way house at the ninth tee, disappeared when replaced by the concrete block structure at the tenth tee.

In 1967 another aspect of changing times came to Oakley—the introduction of motorized golf carts, which certainly present a vivid contrast to the beginning of the century when “Sunday bags” and inconspicuous play were normal incidents of week-end use of the course. With the carts came the need for storage and maintenance facilities which brought about expansion of both the utility building and the pro-shop.

As the years have passed four commemorative drinking fountains have been placed around the course as memorials to deceased members who loved and were beloved by Oakley. Each bears an appropriate tablet and, in the order of their erection, honor Robert B. Kayser at the fourteenth tee, Dr. Walter C. Feeney at the sixteenth green, Deran S. Hintlian at the fifth tee and Harold D. Casson Sr. at the seventh tee.

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The club has also, from time to time, honored members in a different way—not by subsequent commemoration but by current recognition; and it has been done by awarding the Oakley Gold Medal for exceptional service. The medal is accompanied by a suitably inscribed parchment in duplicate; one for retention by the recipient, the other for permanent display at the club house. The recipients thus far have been:

Charles Stetson	1948
Frederick L. Reynolds	1948
William B. Durant	1951
Louis M. Hannum	1951
James Thomson Jr.	1959
Michael Ohanian	1968
Horace M. Chadsey	1969

Oakley's seventy-five years have been proudly rewarding to successive generations of members and its activities now involve more participants than perhaps ever before. But just as in its initial period the acquisition of the needed space was of great concern to its founders, so now is the retention of such an urban oasis of

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equal concern to its present members. The incessant pressures of community development have generated more than one attempt to acquire the Oakley land for other uses and at increasingly large figures. So far Oakley members have resisted these attempts vigorously and with near unanimity. But there will be others and the abiding affection of past and present members must become the heritage of future members if The Oakley Country Club is to round out a full century in 1998.

